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Title:

**About
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Self-Introduction

Being unique in our society today not only means one is “special” but can encompass many different meanings, to personal preferences. It is a question asked and pondered by countless people of what it denotes and exemplifies to be unique. As well, it is most definitely a query that may be unanswerable. As I am being requested to answer of why I may be unique, it is my personal thinking and opinion to give details of my passion and ability to play the gu zheng, which sets me apart and become unique.

The gu zheng is a traditional Chinese musical instrument belonging to the the zither family of string instruments. It is plucked, half-tube zither with movable bridges and an average of twenty one strings, which were conventionally made of twisted silk. Now in the modern days, the strings have progressed to be made with metals of either copper or steel wrapped with nylon. As well, the body of the gu zheng is largely made from wu tong wood.

I was faithfully attracted to the gu zheng when I was a child with the vision of its shape and extraordinary sounds and have been playing the traditional instrument since the age of seven years old. Many people of whom I have spoken with about instruments and/or orchestras are still not quite familiar with the gu zheng. It shows and presents more to support the idea of how this traditional

instrument is losing its existence in the world as an instrument that is barely played by modern youngsters nowadays.

Prior to my immigration here to the United States of America, when I still resided in Guang Zhou, China, I took many classes in discussion of Chinese arts and their historical meanings and developed the hobby to draw with watercolors and traditional Chinese brushes. As well, I was fascinated by the Mongol dance techniques and skills which I also became involved and learned through lessons.

With such background of appreciation and education in Chinese arts and cultural dancing, I was even more in depth when I picked up the hobby of playing the gu zheng. As I play the gu zheng, I associate imaginative Chinese artwork and cultural dances to the music, tunes, and soft harmony which comes about. I became involved in the melody to which I play with the gu zheng and indulge in the artwork and dancing and feel the beautification so greatly.

In hopes that the gu zheng will not become an extinct piece of traditional Chinese instrument, I will continue to practice and learn new tunes to polish my skills. In the modern world today, many people do not appreciate the history of which brought us to where we are now. However, I feel I may be unique in the sense that I am able to keep a piece of my cultural history through playing the gu zheng and continue its artistic existence within me.

Keyword

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Abstract: Yuyi Cen

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Abstract of Research paper

This study was concentrated on the students from mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Research shows that religion, economy, and history are all primary factors which affect the choices the students make when they choose their majors or colleges. Chinese international students are the object in this project because they comprise the majority of international students in the United States: they are also the greater part of our international student body in UIUC. Though there are many students that arrive on campus knowing exactly their major and careers, the rest of the students don't, thus this paper be to ready some directions for other international students in their journey toward the path of themselves. In fact, lots of Chinese international students are not determined about what major they are going to pick, instead of choosing with their own will, they are most likely choosing their major under their parents' expectation. This research paper is meant to give those students who have not determined what their major is going to be. Instead of following parents' expectations, students themselves should also have their own opinions toward what major most interested them and would like to take in college. All in all, many of the freshmen here do not fully understand the correlation in between their majors and their future career, either affected by their parents' expectations or not knowing what major best suited them. This research served therefore guide them toward the major they best interested at and will correlate to their future career.

**Initial
Exercises**

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The Amazing "Race"

The lovely, peaceful Earth turns into a violent battleground of survivorship as it is the basic rule of nature that the fittest survives. Millions of years have passed, some animal species had been extinct, technology has advanced, and human has stepped onto the moon, but our competitive nature has yet not changed. After seeing no opposing species on Earth, we began to compete with each others based on racial, color, religious, gender, social status, and philosophical differences. We started to separate ourselves, differentiating each others, even we are all Human. Due to our competitive nature, we race among each others to rich the top and dominate the rest. Human beings' competitive living style has been documented for centuries, yet one of the most modern and outstanding documentation series, "The Amazing Race", record all the fascinating action between men and women. Within each experiment, subjects will form their own teams of two and compete among each other to win the stake rewarded to the winner. The subjects are dropped onto an unfamiliar land and their language often does not work there to stir their confidence by making the competition more frustrating and difficult. Six stops along the competition which the winning teams will move on while the last team to arrive will be eliminated. Subjects' competitive nature will be revealed such as cursing, insulting. It often results in an 'amazing race' to stay in the top.

Besides the competitive action in the human race, our language also reflects the competitive nature of ours. In English, the word "Race" has two distinctive meanings. Being a verb, "Race" is the action between any contest or competition to achieve supremacy and to be at the top of the others. As a noun, "Race" is a group of people related by common descent or heredity and even skin colors

(dictionary.com). In this amazing race among the different human races, competition with each other to remain supremacy within a social contest by suppression and racial discrimination are resulted. In the United States, the English speaking Whites know the true meaning of this word and have applied it to the society they live in with great success.

In the early 1600s, Whites had slaved Blacks and Yellows to work for their bidding and promote the supreme status in the North American society. With little rewarded to the slaves and life-threatening suppression, United States prospered and Whites became the dominating race within the society and across globe. As European and American society strengthen, the white race became economically and politically powerful. The dominating white race of both nations gasps the respect, power, and authority over other races domestically and globally through war, colonization, and monetary strategies. As time goes by, the level of privileges among Whites and different races becomes more obvious. It is true that the ancient slavery ended, but there is not much freedom or privilege for the minorities in the 'Land of Freedom' where is still dominated by Whites. Up till today, there has not been a non-White president in the U.S. Whitehouse where its name can be understood literally as the house of Whites. The U.S. main-street shares the same situation which Whites are dominating the upper class. According to the research done by Deborah Reed and Jennifer Cheng, the average wage for a master degree white person is \$63,786 annually. But the average wage for a master degree black person is \$50,052 annually. Median hourly wage in 2000 for white men was \$20.83, \$16.96 for Hispanic men, and \$15.41 for African American. All these data indicates the long history of the racial race among us from the physical slavery to the financial slavery. The winner of the race is able to maintain the supremacy among the others.

The above research shows the obvious difference within the

privileges in income that the Whites are getting compares to other races in U.S. But why is that unbalance while they are all graduated from the same university and live among each others in the same neighborhood? In order to find out, I interviewed Michael Walter who is a White student in a class of mine about what gives the idea that most Whites are superior to the rest. He answered, "Whites has been in U.S. much longer than Asians and Hispanics. We set up the foundation of the great nation and bring peace to the fighting among Indian tribes. Whites are supreme not because we are intellectually smarter than the others in the overall, but we are founders of U.S. and we know what we need to do to maintain U.S. as a powerful nation." Indeed, what Michael said is true. Racial contest has already begun thousands of years ago. People used to conquer lands by claiming territories just like the Whites who stepped onto North America and destroy hundreds of Indian tribes. Then I turned to my mother, Liping Zhang, "People strive for power using different methods. War is use to eliminate your opponents and suppression is to maintain them in a controllable scale. Within 5000 years of Chinese history, war and suppression were the key elements of a dynasty's success. But such success often costs thousands of lives and many people's freedom." Lives and freedom are exactly what contributed to the great and powerful U.S. nation. Due to long years of suppression of the minority races and brain washing, people automatically relate Whites to richness and power. These facts prove that people pay more respect and admiration to Whites without a conscious examination, such as whites' hourly income is higher than the other races and occupy higher position than them.

Does the greatest sport game in history, the Olympics, looks familiar? It is exactly what is going on in a racial competitive society. First of all, the reward system of both sport and social competitions is very alike, top winner is rewarded with more than the rest. In value-wise, gold is more than silver, silver more than bronze, and bronze is better than nothing. So the winner is

rewarded with a more beneficial privilege in both materially and psychologically as being more famous and having more pride. For example, the great American Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps, has won 14 career Olympic gold medals and is rewarded with \$100 million endorsement annually due to his unbeatable fame (C. Rhoads). While his other teammates, hardly getting anything.

These entire sum up that the winning race will be rewarded with more supremacy in the society, such as a better paid or a more respectable social status like mentioned before in the U.S. society. Whites won the race, and by staying at the top, they can get better pays, be the president of the nation, and continue their domination among the world by waging war with others or deporting any race that threatens their power.

Question

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October 21, 2008

Questions List for Chinese International Students

- 1) Where are you from?
- 2) How long have you been here?
- 3) Did you go to high school in U.S.?
- 4) Do you have any relative in U.S.? Are they close to you?
- 5) What is your major? / Which college are you in?
- 6) What is the highest education for your mother/father?

- 7) What are your parents' expectations to you?
- 8) What is your dream job?
- 9) How do you think between your parents' expectation and your future?
- 10) Could you tell the difference among Chinese international students?
- 11) How you see each other?
- 12) Could you tell your culture?
- 13) What is your religion?
- 14) Is the same religion that your parents believe?
- 15) How many languages can you speak?
- 16) What language do you speak the most in your homeland?
- 17) Is English your second language?
- 18) When did you learn English?
- 19) Why you choose UIUC?
- 20) When did you confirm you are going attend UIUC to get higher education?
- 21) Is UIUC your dream college?
- 22) If not, please tell why you choose UIUC?
- 23) If yes, please tell what you like about UIUC before you attend it?
- 24) What was your living style in your homeland?
- 25) Any difference between your imagination of UIUC and the real

UIUC?

26) Did your living style change?

27) If yes, please explain.

28) Do you like the living style in UIUC?

Plan:

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RHET 103

October 14, 2008

Research Plan

The topic I am going to do on my research project is about how Chinese choose their dream college and perfect majors: does it relate to their cultures? I would like to interview some UIUC Chinese students, which include people from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, and mainland China. This research project will deal with four groups of people; each group has two people originated in the same part of China. They need to answer the same questions that I think before the interview. I shall take full advantage of their responses in my project.

Analyze the [annotated bibliography](#) of published articles or IDEALS essays is one of the important parts on my research project. I will concentrate on the materials about Chinese international students. I think their point of view would be very useful to me when I decide what to ask during the interview and help me easier to focus on the main ideas.

The last resource that I am going to use in my research is the

survey from those UIUC students. The big difference between the resource from the interview and the survey would be standpoint. I think the resources would be more subjectively from the survey than the interview. I will try to do more considerations of objective reality and purely subjective response.

Data:

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Discuss: Through out doing this research project, I find it difficult on collecting all th data and response from those who i asked and combine them all together. However, it is interesting when encounter with people from different places and having them answer my questions.

EUI
Links:

Reflect:

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Personal Reflection of Research Project

Back to the summer right before I came to University of Urbana-Champaign, I was worrying all day about the changes of my live. I did not even want to reply a word when people were keeping asking me "Are you so exciting about college?" The only thing I wanted to do was say it loud that I was so scared about college since I am here without a major. When people are trying to pick a major to success their career goal, the first thing that comes to mind must be salary. "How can I make as much money as soon as possible?" This is generally a pretty rational thought; such as the Chinese international students who run in frenzy towards engineering, computer science, and IT type jobs – the starting salary is great. However, I have more to care about such as my parents' expectation. After I finished this research paper on how cultures affects of Chinese international students' intent on choosing their college or major, I discovered that we see things in different point of views always help us think more clearly. Cultures were only a word in my mind before I worked on this research project. I never thought that could include as much as the values of historical, geographical, political, language, religious, parents' expectation from older generations, etc. There are more Chinese cultures such as temporary economic growth of china, history of science and technology in traditional China, ect. by finding the resources for this study. Since the Chinese's economy is growing

rapidly, more and more foreign companies have investment in China. As a result, they need people who can speak both Chinese and English fluently that can be assigned as managers position once go back to China from studying abroad. Therefore, business major is one of the hottest major among the Chinese international students over here in UIUC. Though my major is still undeclared, but like most of the Chinese international students, I am expected to major in Business on my second year of college followed by my parents' expectation. However, I would like to pick the major that I am not only best interested at but also is correlated to my future career.